

01174

1989/06/28

CONFIDENTIAL
UNCLASSIFIED
Department of State

17584
E54 INCOMING
TELEGRAM

PAGE 81 OF 82 BEIJING 17584 00 OF 03 288637Z

4471 EAP3896

BEIJING 17584 00 OF 03 288637Z

17584

RELEASER

ACTION OFFICE CH-03

INFO TC-01 P-01 RA-01 LAB-01 UN-01 EAP-05 /815 A2 00K

INFO LOG-05 AOS-08 INR-07 EUR-08 SS-08 CIAE-08 M-01
RCA-06 NSCE-08 NSAE-08 SSO-08 MA-08 L-03 TRSE-08
PH-10 AIT-02 PA-01 OME-01 IREE-08 USIE-08 SP-02
SMP-01 PRS-01 DS-08 SCT-02 P-02 T-01 /850 V

135643 288641Z JUN 99

O 288621Z JUN 99

FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2847

INFO AIT TAIPEI PRIORITY

AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU PRIORITY

AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY

AMCONSUL SHANGHAI PRIORITY

AMCONSUL XIENYANG PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY

SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

DIA WASHDC PRIORITY

USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI PRIORITY

AMCONSUL CHENGDU POUCH

CONFIDENTIAL BEIJING 17584

NSC FOR DODD PARL

CINCPAC FOR FPA FINNEY

E.O. 12356:DECL:OARH

TAGS: PGOV, PHUM, "SOFT," CH

REF ID: A0 BEIJING 16971; Q0 BEIJING 16846

SUBJECT: TSCH01 -- TIANANMEN, JUNE 3-4; A PERSONAL ACCOUNT

1. CONFIDENTIAL.

2. THE FOLLOWING REPORT IS CONOFF'S EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT OF THE EVENTS IN THE TIANANMEN VICINITY ON THE NIGHT OF JUNE 3-4. THIS ACCOUNT, WRITTEN ON JUNE 4, IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE EVENTS OF THE PRECEDING NIGHT, IS BEING SENT NOW TO CLARIFY THE EVENTS ON EAST AND WEST CHANGAN ROAD, WHERE MUCH OF THE SHOOTING AND CASUALTIES OCCURRED.

SATURDAY EVENING, JUNE 3

3. 2230. WHEN THE TIANANMEN STUDENT LOUDSPEAKERS ANNOUNCED THAT PLA FORCES HAD BEEN SUCCESSFULLY TURNED BACK AT JIANGUOCHE, A WAVE OF RELIEF, EVEN A SENSE OF EUPHORIA, SWEEPED THE CROWD OF 200,000 GATHERED IN TIANANMEN AND ON CHANGAN EAST ROAD. ABOUT TEN THOUSAND DEMONSTRATORS THEN MOVED TO THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF TIANANMEN SQUARE FOR A VICTORY RALLY, WITH STUDENT LEADERS GIVING SPEECHES AND INTRODUCING YAN JIAO, BEI DAO, WANG DAY, HE DAIJIAN, AND OTHER WELL KNOWN PRO-DEMOCRACY LEADERS TO THE EXCITING AUDIENCE. SPEAKERS PROCLAIMED "THE PEOPLE ARE VICTORIOUS," "TODAY IS THE BEGINNING OF DEMOCRACY IN CHINA," AND "NOW THE PARTY WILL BE REJUVENATED AND DEMOCRATIZED." MOST OF THE OTHER DEMONSTRATORS BEGAN

BIKING HOMEWARD,

RELEASER

4. (COMMENT ON ANCITS IN TIANANMEN: AT THIS POINT, CONOFF RETURNED TO THE BEIJING HOTEL; THERE HE LEARNED FROM AMEMBASSY THAT A LARGE COLUMN OF APCS AND TRUCKS WAS APPROACHING TIANANMEN FROM THE WEST. HE WENT BACK TO THE SQUARE TO FIND AND INFORM ANCITS AND TO URGE THEM TO LEAVE THE SQUARE IMMEDIATELY. OF THE 20-30 ANCITS ENCOUNTERED -- MOST TOURISTS OR STUDENTS -- ALL BUT SEVERAL TELEVISION CAMERAMEN APPEARED TO HAVE LEFT THE SQUARE AT THAT TIME.

CONTINUING WESTWARD TO XIDAN, CONOFF MET SEVERAL MORE ANCITS; BY THAT TIME, APCS HAD ARRIVED AND PLA SHOOTING WAS INTENSE, SO CONOFF LED THESE ANCITS TO AN ALLEY, WHICH THEY FOLLOWED AROUND TIANANMEN BACK TO THE BEIJING HOTEL. THUS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF AMERICAN TELEVISION AND PRESS PERSONNEL, IT APPEARS THAT VIRTUALLY ALL ANCITS HAD LEFT TIANANMEN BY THE TIME THE APC COLUMN ARRIVED AT THE SQUARE. END COMMENT.)

5. 2330. THE SELF-CONGRATULATORY SPEECHES WERE INTERRUPTED BY AN ANNOUNCEMENT THAT PLA FORCES "HAVE REACHED FUXINGHEN." THE RALLY BROKE UP AND THOUSANDS OF DEMONSTRATORS BEGAN RUNNING WEST TOWARD XIDAN; THEY RIPPED UP CONCRETE AND METAL ROAD DIVIDERS AND OVERTURNED TRUCKS AND BUSES TO BUILD BARRICADES.

SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 4

6. 0400. A LONE APC SUDDENLY ROARED DOWN WEST CHANGAN ROAD AT ABOUT 35 MPH, HEADING EAST TOWARD TIANANMEN. PLOWING THROUGH THE DEMONSTRATORS AND RUNNING OVER SOME, IT TURNED DOWN THE WEST SIDE OF THE GREAT WALL OF THE PEOPLE (GWOP) AND CAME TO A HALT AT THE FOOT OF THE GWOP WESTERN STAIRCASE. THOUSANDS OF ENRAGED DEMONSTRATORS RUSHED AFTER THE APC, SURROUNDED IT AND HURLED CONCRETE BLOCKS, AND CLIMBED ON TOP AND POUNDED ON THE METAL HATCH.

7. 0440. AT ZHONGGHANHAI, SEVERAL HUNDRED ARMED PLA INFANTRY STREAMED OUT OF THE LEADERSHIP COMPOUND, PUSHING DEMONSTRATORS FURTHER OUT INTO THE STREET.

8. 0455. TWO PLA TRUCKS JUST WEST OF ZHONGGHANHAI, CAPTURED AND DISABLED BY DEMONSTRATORS IN THE EARLY AFTERNOON, WERE RIPPED APART FOR BLOCKADE MATERIAL. THEN THEY AND SEVERAL CITY BUSES WERE SET ON FIRE.

9. 0500. AS THE CORNER OF NORTH XINHUA STREET, THE FIRST DISTANT GUNFIRE COULD BE HEARD IN THE VICINITY OF THE HINZU HOTEL, A MILE FURTHER TO THE WEST; AN ORANGE GLOM SPREAD DOWN THE LENGTH OF WEST CHANGAN ROAD AS BUSES AND TRUCKS WERE OVERTURNED AND BURNED. THE DENSELY PACKED CROWD AT THIS STREET CORNER CONSISTED PRIMARILY OF LOCAL RESIDENTS AND YOUNG WORKERS. AS THE GUNSHOTS GREW LOUDER AND THE FIRST APC HEADLIGHTS CAME INTO VIEW MOVING SLOWLY EASTWARD, A FEELING OF RAGE AMONG THE CROWD MOUNTED. "HOW CAN CHINESE SHOOT CHINESE," CRIED ONE ELDERLY WOMAN. "WE ARE THE PEOPLE, NOT THEM." A YOUNG MAN SHOUTED POINTING TO ZHONGGHANHAI, "THEY ARE GANGSTERS."

10. 0510. SUDDENLY, A DEEP RUMBLE CAME FROM THE REAR OF THE CROWD AS IT FACED WEST. THE CROWD FLARED APART IN TERROR AS THE BATTERED APC FROM THE GWOP CAREENED BY AT TOP SPEED WESTWARD WITH A FIRE BLAZING ON TOP. DEMONSTRATORS THREW LARGE CHUNKS OF CONCRETE AT THE TRACKED WHEELS AND, MANGLED IN DEBRIS, THE APC

9308, 11896

CONFIDENTIAL
UNCLASSIFIED

CONFIDENTIAL
UNCLASSIFIED
Department of State

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

PAGE #2 OF #2 BEIJING 17586 08 OF 03 210637Z
GROUND TO A HALT 200 FEET WEST OF NORTH XINHUA
STREET. ENRAGED DEMONSTRATORS CONVERGED ON THE APC,
PILE EVERY AVAILABLE SCRAP OF FURNITURE AND WOOD
AROUND THE VEHICLE, AND SET IT ON FIRE. AFTER
SEVERAL MINUTES, THE HATCH BROKE OPEN AND A SOLDIER
JUMPED OUT; THE CROWD GRABBED AND BEAT HIM,
APPARENTLY TO DEATH. A SECOND SOLDIER WAS SURROUNDED
BY SEVERAL STUDENTS WHO PROTECTED HIM FROM THE ANGRY
CROWD, AND A THIRD SOLDIER WAS PULLED OUT DEAD.

11. 0126. ADVANCING APCs ARRIVED AT NORTH XINHUA
STREET SPewing GUNFIRE BEFORE THEM. WITH BULLETS
WHIZZING BY AND PEOPLE FALLING TO THE GROUND IN POOLS
OF BLOOD, DEMONSTRATORS REALIZED TO THEIR HORROR THAT
THE SOLDIERS WERE NOT FIRING BLANKS OR RUBBER BULLETS
AND RASHLY RETREATED TOWARD TIANANMEN AND DOWN SIDE
STREETS.

12. 0145. THE PLA FORCE REACHED TIANANMEN AND APCs
FAKED OUT IN A LINE ACROSS CHANGAN ROAD AT A POINT
EVEN WITH THE EASTERN FRONT OF THE CROP. THEY
REMAINED THERE UNMOVING, A ROW OF HEADLIGHTS FACING A
CROWD OF FIFTEEN THOUSAND DEMONSTRATORS ON EAST
CHANGAN ROAD.

13. 0155. CONOFF MADE A LAST CIRCUIT THROUGH THE
TIANANMEN STUDENT ENCAMPMENT. THE NEWLY CONSTRUCTED
CITY OF LBD TENTS WAS VIRTUALLY EMPTY. APPROXIMATELY
3800 STUDENTS WERE GATHERED TIGHTLY AROUND THE
MONUMENT TO THE REVOLUTIONARY HEROES, WITH A FOREST
OF FLAGS AND BANNERS ABOVE THEIR HEADS. THEY WOULD,
THEY TOLD CONOFF, STAY AND WAIT FOR THE TROOPS TO
ARRIVE.

14. 0205. PLA TROOPS AND APCs IN FRONT OF MAO'S
PORTRAIT OPENED FIRE ON THE LARGE CROWD OF
DEMONSTRATORS ON CHANGAN ROAD; THE LATTER RETREATED
ON THE RUN EASTWARD TOWARD THE BEIJING HOTEL. THERE
WERE SCREAMS OF PAIN AS PEOPLE WERE HIT AT RANDOM AND
FELL TO THE GROUND. A MAN, WHO HAD JUST SHOUTED TO
CONOFF "DO SOMETHING! YOU FOREIGNERS MUST HELP US!"
FELL WITH A BULLET IN THE CENTER OF HIS FOREHEAD.

15. 0210. A DEADLY PATTERN OF CONFRONTATION ENSUED
FOR THE NEXT THREE HOURS ON EAST CHANGAN ROAD BETWEEN
TIANANMEN AND THE BEIJING HOTEL. ABOUT ONE HUNDRED
PLA SOLDIERS IN PRONE POSITION WERE LINED ACROSS THE
STREET NEXT TO THE HISTORY MUSEUM, THEIR RIFLES
POINTED TOWARD THE PARALLEL LINE OF DEMONSTRATORS
FIFTY YARDS TO THE EAST. EACH TIME THE SOLDIERS
OPENED FIRE, THE DEMONSTRATORS BROKE AND RAN FOR WHAT
LITTLE COVER WAS AVAILABLE; AFTER A FEW MINUTES, THE
DEMONSTRATORS WOULD BEGIN TO RETURN TO THE STREET,
PILE BODIES ON PEDICABS, AND REFORM THEIR LINE, UNTIL
THE NEXT BARRAGE OF GUNFIRE. WITH EACH VOLLEY, TEN
TO FIFTEEN DEMONSTRATORS FELL.

16. 0227. THE LIGHTS OF TIANANMEN, WHICH WENT OFF
AT 3:30, CAME BACK ON TO REVEAL AN ARMORY BRISTLING
WITH ROW UPON ROW OF APCs, TANKS, AND TRUCKS. THE
LIGHTS ALSO REVEALED AT THE NORTHERN END OF THE
SQUARE, THE HEAPED REMAINS OF THE "GODDESS OF
DEMOCRACY," AND A COLUMN OF SMOKE ROSE ABOVE THE
MONUMENT TO THE REVOLUTIONARY HEROES. THE VIEW OF
THE SQUARE AND THE MONUMENT WAS BLOCKED BY BUILDINGS,
AND THE DEMONSTRATORS, ASSUMING THAT THE GUNFIRE ON
THE SQUARE MEANT THE STUDENTS WERE BEING KILLED,
CONTINUED THEIR HOPELESS, UNARMED CONFRONTATION
AGAINST THE PLA TROOPS.

4471 EAP3090

BEIJING 17586 08 OF 03 210637Z

4471 EAP3090

17. 0310. A SECOND COLUMN OF ABOUT 50 APCs, TANKS,
AND TRUCKS ROARED BY ON EAST CHANGAN ROAD AND ENTERED
THE SQUARE FROM THE EAST SIDE. WHEN THE
DEMONSTRATORS SHOUTED ANGRILY AT THE VEHICLES, PLA
INFANTRY OPENED FIRE WITH TWO JEEP-MOUNTED MACHINE
GUNS, LAYING DOWN A BARRAGE THAT LASTED FOR FIFTEEN
MINUTES. WHEN THE CARNAGE CEASED, EAST CHANGAN ROAD
BETWEEN THE SQUARE AND THE BEIJING HOTEL WAS EMPTY
EXCEPT FOR ABOUT 25-30 MOVING AND STILL BODIES. THE
DEMONSTRATORS EDGED BACK ON TO THE STREET, LOADED THE
DEAD, AND WOUNDED ONTO PEDICABS, AND TURNED ONCE AGAIN
TO CONFRONT THE LINE OF PLA RIFLEMEN.

18. 0620. A THIRD COLUMN OF ABOUT FORTY APCs,
TANKS, AND TRUCKS ROLLED DOWN EAST CHANGAN ROAD FROM
THE EAST AND ENTERED TIANANMEN. PLA INFANTRY LAID
DOWN A HEAVY TEN-MINUTE BARRAGE OF MACHINEGUN FIRE
WITH MANY CASUALTIES.

19. THROUGH BOTH OF THE EAST CHANGAN MASSACRES (5:30
AND 6:20), THE SOOTHING, HELLIFLUOUS VOICE BROADCAST
OVER THE GOVERNMENT LOUDSPEAKERS ON TIANANMEN.
CONTINUED TO REASSURE "BEIJING FRIENDS" THAT THE
"CHAOS HAS ENDED, ORDER HAS BEEN RESTORED, AND THE
MOLIARDS HAVE BEEN DEALT WITH."

20. 0730. THE LOUDSPEAKERS WENT SILENT FOR A FEW
MOMENTS, THEN THE FAMILIAR STRAINS OF THE UPRIGHT
CHINESE NATIONAL ANTHEM FILLED THE AIR. HALFWAY
THROUGH, THE MUSIC WAS SMOTHERED BY RIFLE FIRE BEHIND
THE HISTORY MUSEUM, THEN BY ANOTHER BARRAGE OF
MACHINE GUN FIRE DIRECTED AT THE DEMONSTRATORS ON
EAST CHANGAN ROAD. WHEN THE ANTHEM CONCLUDED, A SOFT
FEMALE VOICE ANNOUNCED, "GOOD MORNING, COMRADES.
HAPPILY THE ANTI-REVOLUTIONARY ELEMENTS HAVE BEEN
DEFEATED. PEACE IS RESTORED TO OUR BELOVED TIANANMEN
SQUARE." LILLEY

CONFIDENTIAL
UNCLASSIFIED